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## **EMERGENCY PRESCRIPTION REFILLS**

On March 10, 2020, Governor Charles D. Baker declared a State of Emergency in the Commonwealth to respond to the spread of COVID-19. On March 24, 2020, the Commissioner of Public Health issued an Order authorizing pharmacists and pharmacies to dispense emergency prescription refills in the event the prescriber is not available, in accordance with this policy.

Specifically, the Order authorizes pharmacies and pharmacists to dispense a refill of medication for continuation of therapy for a chronic condition when a prescription has no available refills, provided the following requirements are satisfied:

- Pharmacists must use their professional judgment to determine whether an emergency refill is necessary for patients to maintain access to prescription medication.
- The prescriber is not readily available to authorize a refill of the medication (i.e. within 72 hours).
- The maintenance medication for a chronic condition has been unchanged for at least 3 months.
- The refill prescription is reduced to writing and marked "emergency prescription."
- The quantity is limited to a 30 day supply (or smallest available package size).
- Pharmacists will not be required to obtain a follow-up hard copy of the prescription from the patient's provider.
- In the case of Schedule II controlled substances, an emergency supply may only be dispensed under existing DEA rules.
- The dispensing pharmacist shall notify the prescriber of the emergency dispensing within a reasonable time after such dispensing.

All applicable statutes, regulations, guidance not inconsistent with the Order and this guidance remain in effect.

The Order and this guidance are effective immediately and shall remain in effect until the State of Emergency is terminated by the Governor, or the Order is rescinded by the Commissioner, whichever shall happen first.